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Former Librarian of Congress, fired by Trump, vows to improve public information in new Mellon role

By JAMES POLLARD
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The former Librarian of Congress abruptly fired by President Donald Trump has found a new position with the country's largest philanthropic supporter of the arts.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation exclusively told The Associated Press that Carla Hayden will join the humanities grantmaker Monday as a senior fellow whose duties will include advising on efforts to advance public knowledge through libraries and archives.The year-long post places Hayden back at the center of the very debates over American culture that surrounded her dismissal. The White House ousted Hayden, the first woman and the first African American to hold the title, after she was accused of promoting "radical" literary material by a conservative advocacy group seeking to squash Trump opposition within the federal government.

Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden arrives at the presentation of the Gershwin Prize, to be awarded to Joni Mitchell at DAR Constitution Hall in Washington March 1, 2023.

Associated Press

Hayden acknowledged existing threats to "the free exchange of ideas" in a statement to the AP.

"For generations, libraries, archives, and cultural institutions have been the guardians of knowledge and the catalysts for human progress," she said. "Together, we will work to strengthen the public knowledge ecosystem and ensure that the transformative power of information remains accessible to all."

Mellon's response to government funding cuts

Meanwhile, the Mellon Foundation has been working to fill fiscal holes for arts communities reeling from federal cuts. Its $15 million "emergency" fund aims to offset the $65 million that were supposed to go to the state humanities councils that organize book fairs, heritage festivals, theater productions and other programs fostering cultural engagement.

The foundation has previously supported the American Library Association's efforts to counter book bans, increase scholarships for librarians of color and boost adult literacy.

Mellon President Elizabeth Alexander said the foundation is thrilled to welcome Hayden, "a leader with an unshakable regard for the public good of the American people," during such a "crucial time." Public knowledge institutions are navigating "historic challenges and transformative advances," according to Mellon, including artificial intelligence, digital technologies, federal funding withdrawals and censorship efforts.

Who is the Librarian of Congress and what is the job?

The library's interim leadership is a point of dispute. Trump appointed Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche, who represented the president during his 2024 criminal trial, as acting librarian.

But staff, awaiting congressional approval of Trump's permanent pick, have recognized Robert Newlen, who assumed the title upon Hayden's ouster.

The role 's responsibilities range from looking after collections to selecting the country's poet laureate to awarding the Gershwin Prize for Popular Song and the Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction. The library also manages the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service.

Librarians serve 10-year terms, and Hayden's was scheduled to end in 2026. Her tenure included modernizing its reservoir of the nation's books and history. She oversaw new initiatives reaching out to rural and online audiences. ❑

Migrants deported from U.S. to Salvadoran prison remain under U.S. control, Salvadoran officials tell U.N.

By MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The government of El Salvador has acknowledged to United Nations investigators that the Trump administration maintains control of the Venezuelan men who were deported from the U.S. to a notorious Salvadoran prison, contradicting public statements by officials in both countries.

A prisoner is moved as Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem tours of the Terrorist Confinement Center in Tecoluca, El Salvador, March 26, 2025.

Associated Press

The revelation was contained in court filings Monday by lawyers for more than 100 migrants who are seeking to challenge their deportations to El Salvador's mega-prison known as the Terrorism Confinement Center, or CECOT.

The case is among several challenging President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown.

"In this context, the jurisdiction and legal responsibility for these persons lie exclusively with the competent foreign authorities," Salvadoran officials wrote in response to queries from the unit of the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The U.N. group has been looking into the fate of the men who were sent to El Salvador from the United States in mid-March, even after a U.S. judge had ordered the planes that were carrying them to be turned around.

The Trump administration has argued that it is powerless to return the men, noting that they are beyond the reach of U.S. courts and no longer have access to due process rights or other U.S. constitutional guarantees.

But lawyers for the migrants said the U.N. report shows otherwise.

"El Salvador has confirmed what we and everyone else understood: it is the United States that controls what happens to the Venezuelans languishing at CECOT. Remarkably the U.S. government didn't provide this information to us or the court," American Civil Liberties Union lawyer Lee Gelerent said in an email.

Skye Perryman, CEO and president of Democracy Forward, said the documents show "that the administration has not been honest with the court or the American people."❑

RFK Jr. promoted a food company he says will make Americans healthy. Their meals are ultraprocessed

By AMANDA SEITZ and JONEL ALECCIA
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Health secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. on Monday praised a company that makes $7-a-pop meals that are delivered directly to the homes of Medicaid and Medicare enrollees.

He even thanked Mom's Meals for sending taxpayer-funded meals "without additives" to the homes of sick or elderly Americans. The spreads include chicken bacon ranch pasta for dinner and French toast sticks with fruit or ham patties.

"This is really one of the solutions for making our country healthy again," Kennedy said in the video, posted to his official health secretary account, after he toured the company's Oklahoma facility last week.

But an Associated Press review of Mom's Meals menu, including the ingredients and nutrition labels, shows that the company's offerings are the type of heat-and-eat, ultraprocessed foods that Kennedy routinely criticizes for making people sick.

The meals contain chemical additives that would render them impossible to recreate at home in your kitchen, said Marion Nestle, a nutritionist at New York University and food policy expert, who reviewed the menu for The AP. Many menu items are high in sodium, and some are high in sugar or saturated fats, she said.

Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr., testifies during a House Energy and Commerce Committee, Tuesday, June 24, 2025, in Washington.

Associated Press

"It is perfectly possible to make meals like this with real foods and no ultra-processing additives but every one of the meals I looked at is loaded with such additives," Nestle said. "What's so sad is that they don't have to be this way. Other companies are able to produce much better products, but of course they cost more."

Mom's Meals do not have the artificial, petroleum dyes that Kennedy has pressured companies to remove from products, she noted.

Mom's Meals said in an emailed response that its food products "do not include ingredients that are commonly found in ultra-processed foods." The company does not use synthetic food dyes, high fructose corn syrup, certain sweeteners or synthetic preservatives that are banned in Europe, said Teresa Roof, a company spokeswoman. The meals are a "healthy alternative" to what many people would find in their grocery stores, said Andrew Nixon, U.S. Health and Human Services spokesman, in response to questions about Mom's Meals.

Mom's Meals is one of several companies across the U.S. that deliver "medically tailored" at-home meals. The meal programs are covered by Medicaid for some enrollees, including people who are sick with cancer or diabetes, as well as some older Americans who are enrolled in certain Medicare health insurance plans.

Patients recently discharged from the hospital can also have the meals delivered, according to the company's website.

It's unclear how much federal taxpayers spend on providing meals through Medicaid and Medicare every year. An investigation by STAT news last year found that some states were spending millions of dollars to provide medically tailored meals to Medicaid enrollees that were marketed as healthy and "dietician approved." But many companies served up meals loaded with salt, fat or sugar all staples of an unhealthy American's diet, the report concluded.

Defining ultraprocessed foods can be tricky. Most U.S. foods are processed, whether it's by freezing, grinding, fermentation, pasteurization or other means. Foods created through industrial processes and with ingredients such as additives, colors and preservatives that you couldn't duplicate in a home kitchen are considered the most processed.❑

Maine and a GOP lawmaker who ID'd a transgender athlete online agree lawsuit is now moot

By PATRICK WHITTLE
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — Attorneys for the state of Maine and a conservative lawmaker who identified a transgender teen student athlete online now agree that the lawmaker's appeal over her loss of voting rights for her post is now moot.

Republican state Rep. Laurel Libby identified the athlete in a February social media post that went viral and called into question the student's gender identity, bringing attention to the issue of transgender teens participating in sports. Maine's Democratic-controlled House of Representatives censured Libby for violating the House code of ethics and blocked her from speaking and voting on the floor.

Libby sued, and the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in May that the Maine legislature must allow her to vote. Lawmakers voted in June to halt the restrictions.

Maine Assistant Attorney General Kimberly Patwardhan said in court papers filed late last month that there are "no longer any restrictions on Rep. Libby's ability to vote or debate" and "this appeal is now moot." Libby said in a statement Monday that she will "not contest the AG's mootness argument" and added that she never provided the apology House Democrats asked of her.

State Rep. Laurel Libby, R-Auburn, speaks with a colleague, Feb. 14, 2023, at the State House in Augusta, Maine.

Associated Press

"I believe this case sends a clear message: elected officials do not surrender their constitutional rights at the Capitol steps and neither do the people who sent them there," Libby said.

The appeal still needs to be formally dismissed by a court, but it is essentially dropped "given that both parties are in agreement about the mootness issue," said Danna Hayes, a spokesperson for the attorney general's office.❑

Troops and federal agents briefly descend on park in L.A. neighborhood with large immigrant population

By TARA COPP and DAMIAN DOVARGANES
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Dozens of federal officers in tactical gear and about 90 members of the California National Guard were deployed for about an hour Monday to a mostly empty park in a Los Angeles neighborhood with a large immigrant population. It wasn't immediately known if any arrests were made.

Defense officials had said the troops and over a dozen military vehicles would help protect immigration officers as they carried out a raid in MacArthur Park.

"What I saw in the park today looked like a city under siege, under armed occupation," said Mayor Karen Bass, who was among the small crowd who watched as officers moved through a section of the park in the late morning and then got back in the vehicles and cleared out. Some activists who had earlier warned people to leave the area filmed the officers.

The operation occurred at a park in a neighborhood with large Mexican, Central American and other immigrant populations and is lined by businesses with signs in Spanish and other languages that has been dubbed by local officials as the "Ellis Island of the West Coast."

Federal agents ride on and armored vehicle at MacArthur Park Monday, July 7, 2025, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

Messages were sent to Immigration and Customs Enforcement seeking additional details.

Jeannette Zanipatin with the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights saw the brief but prominent presence of troops and federal officers at the park. "I definitely think it's a source of intimidation," she said. "We know that the Trump administration is trying to make an example of Los Angeles."

The operation in the large park about 2 miles west of downtown LA included 17 Humvees, four tactical vehicles, two ambulances and the armed soldiers, defense officials said. It came after President Donald Trump deployed thousands of Guard members and active duty Marines to the city last month following protests over previous immigration raids.

Trump has stepped up efforts to realize his campaign pledge of deporting millions of immigrants in the United States illegally and shown a willingness to use the nation's military might in ways other U.S. presidents have typically avoided.

Betsy Bolte, who lives nearby, came to the park after seeing a military-style helicopter circling. She arrived to see federal officers on horseback moving through a grassy area, with activists and passersby shouting at them.

Bolte didn't see any arrests and said it was "gut-wrenching" to witness what appeared to be a federal show of force on the streets of a U.S. city. "It's terror and, you know, it's ripping the heart and soul out of Los Angeles," she said. "I am still in shock, disbelief, and so angry and terrified and heartbroken."

The defense officials told reporters that it was not a military operation but acknowledged that the size and scope of the Guard's participation could make it look like one to the public. That is why the officials spoke on condition of anonymity to provide details about the raid that were not announced publicly.

"It's just going to be more overt and larger than we usually participate in," one of the officials said before the raid ended abruptly with no explanation.

The primary role of the service members would be to protect the immigration enforcement officers in case a hostile crowd gathered, that official said. They are not participating in any law enforcement activities such as arrests, but service members can temporarily detain citizens if necessary before handing them over to law enforcement, the official said.❑

Possible sighting of Washington man wanted in the deaths of his 3 daughters prompts search in Idaho

This undated photo provided by the Wenatchee Police Department shows Travis Caleb Decker, who is wanted in connection with the deaths of his three daughters.

Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — Federal authorities in Idaho are following up on a possible sighting over the weekend of a Washington state man wanted in connection with the deaths of his three daughters.

The U.S. Marshals Service Greater Idaho Fugitive Task Force said it had received a tip Saturday from a family recreating near a camping area in Idaho's Sawtooth National Forest that they saw a man whose description was consistent with that of Travis Decker.

Decker has been wanted since June 2, when a sheriff's deputy in Washington found his truck and the bodies of his three daughters 9-year-old Paityn Decker, 8-year-old Evelyn Decker and 5-year-old Olivia Decker at a campground outside Leavenworth, Washington.

The discovery came three days after he failed to return the girls to their mother's home in Wenatchee, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) east of Seattle, following a scheduled visit.

Authorities in Washington on June 10 said they believed they'd spotted Decker, a former soldier, near a remote alpine lake in a popular backpacking area in the Cascade Range. Tracking teams followed up on a tip from hikers who reported seeing a lone hiker who appeared to be ill-prepared for the conditions.

But he has not been found.

Eric Toms, supervisory deputy U.S. Marshal with the District of Boise, said the agency was receiving more tips from the public following the statement the task force released Sunday. Toms in an email said the agency was evaluating each tip and that a search team involving the marshals service, the U.S. Forest Service and the Camas County Sheriff's Office set out Monday.

He said authorities planned to speak with local residents and people camping or recreating in the area. He said Decker has a history of hitchhiking and encouraged motorists to not pick up any hitchhikers.

Toms did not immediately respond to follow-up questions sent by email.

The forest area is nearly 600 miles (965 kilometers) from the lake where authorities were searching last month.

The Marshals Service is offering a reward of up to $20,000 for information leading to Decker's capture.❑

E.U. commission chief accuses adversaries of peddling conspiracies ahead of no-confidence vote

By LORNE COOK
Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen accused her political adversaries of peddling conspiracies about her and the COVID-19 pandemic as she defended herself on Monday ahead of a rare no-confidence vote.

Von der Leyen said a group of hard-right lawmakers that has tabled censure motion against the European Union's executive branch is trying to drive a wedge between pro-European political groups in the European Parliament.

"We can never let extremists rewrite history," she said during a plenary session in Strasbourg, France.

The censure motion contained a mix of allegations against von der Leyen including text messaging privately with the boss of vaccine maker Pfizer, misuse of EU funds and interference in elections in Germany and Romania. Von der Leyen led the effort to find vaccines for around 450 million European citizens during the pandemic. EU lawmakers will vote on the motion on Thursday, with a two-thirds majority required to pass. The commission proposes EU laws and supervises whether those that enter force are respected. Von der Leyen is almost certain to win the vote comfortably. She could be forced to resign if she loses. Romanian lawmaker Gheorghe Piperea, who championed the motion and hails from the right-wing populist Alliance for the Union of Romanians, accused von der Leyen of distorting facts and trying to bypass the European Parliament. "The decision-making process has become opaque and discretionary and raises fears of abuse and corruption," he said. Von der Leyen said Piperea's speech "was taken from the oldest playbook of extremists."

She said it was aimed at "polarizing society, eroding trust in democracy, with false claims about election meddling, attempting to rewrite the history (of) how a successful Europe overcame the pandemic together."

The censure motion is another sign of discontent with the former German defense minister and her backers.

Von der Leyen hails from the European People's Party (EPP), a political family uniting conservative parties across the 27-nation bloc and the biggest group in the assembly.

Other pro-European centrist groups took aim at the EPP for working with hard-right parties to seal deals.

The second biggest political group, the Socialists and Democrats (S&D), said the censure motion is a result "of the EPP's irresponsibility and the double games."

Looking to the EPP, S&D leader Iratxe García Pérez said: "Who do you want to govern with? Do you want to govern with those that want to destroy Europe, or those of us who fight every day to build it?" She said, however, that her group would not vote against von der Leyen.❑

EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen walks in the Town Hall Garden at Aarhus Town Hall, Aarhus, Denmark, Thursday, July 3, 2025.

Associated Press

Poland reinstates border controls with Germany and Lithuania to discourage asylum-seekers

By FANNY BRODERSEN, PIETRO DE CRISTOFARO and EBRAHIM NOROOZI
Associated Press

SLUBICE, Poland (AP) — Poland reinstated border controls on Monday with Germany and Lithuania, following similar German restrictions imposed earlier this year aimed at discouraging asylum-seekers.

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, whose government recently survived a confidence vote in parliament, announced the restrictions last week. Pressure has been mounting after far-right groups in Poland have alleged that Germany was transporting migrants into Polish territory after they reached Western Europe.

The reinstated controls, which began overnight Sunday, will last for an initial period of 30 days, though authorities haven't ruled out extending them, according to the Polish Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration.

"Illegal migration is simply a crime," Polish Interior Minister Tomasz Siemoniak said Sunday during a news conference.

The border guard discovered an alleged smuggling operation within minutes of the controls taking effect overnight, officials said.

An Estonian citizen was allegedly trying to take four Afghan nationals over the Lithuanian border, according to the Polish News Agency.

"We're doing this for you as well," Tusk said during a joint news conference with Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof, the news agency reported. "For the Germans, for the Dutch, for the French because this is the European Union border."

The Polish border with Lithuania, which stretches 104 kilometers (65 miles), will see checks in 13 locations. Poland's border with Germany, 467 kilometers (290 miles) long, will have controls at 52 crossing points.

Lithuanian authorities said on Monday they were ready to deal with possible traffic jams at the Polish border.

"If traffic begins to build up, we will start managing the flow ... to minimize disruptions and keep checks as brief as possible," Antanas Montvydas, deputy head of Lithuania's State Border Guard Service told Lithuania radio.

After taking office in May, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, who made a tougher migration policy a pillar of his election campaign, ordered more police at the border and said that some asylum-seekers trying to enter Europe's biggest economy would be turned away.❑

Polish border police check passengers on a bus at a checkpoint bordering Germany, in Slubice, Poland, Monday, July 7, 2025.

Associated Press

Nairobi is locked down as Kenyan police clash with protesters and 10 are killed

By EVELYNE MUSAMBI and INAARA GANGJI
Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Police in Kenya clashed with demonstrators Monday during the latest anti-government protests, killing 10 people, according to the state-funded human rights commission.

Authorities blocked major roads leading into the capital, Nairobi, and most businesses closed amid the strictest measures yet to contain the unrest.

Protesters lit bonfires and threw stones at police. Police fired and hurled tear gas canisters, injuring demonstrators. Young men carried another man, his shirt drenched in blood, saying he had been shot. The protests were reported in 17 of 47 counties.

Kenyan youth and others for weeks have been protesting police brutality and poor governance while demanding President William Ruto's resignation over alleged corruption and the high cost of living.

Protesters carry a man who the crowd claimed had been shot by police during demonstrations to mark the historic 1990 Saba Saba (a Swahili word that means seven seven) protests for democratic reforms in the Kangemi slum of Nairobi, Kenya, Monday, July 7, 2025.
Associated Press

July 7, known as Saba Saba, is a significant date in Kenya's history, marking the first major protests 35 years ago that called on then-President Daniel arap Moi Ruto's mentor for a transition from a one-party state to a multiparty democracy, which was realized in the 1992 elections. Saba Saba is Swahili for Seven Seven.

Police officers on Monday stopped private and public vehicles from accessing Nairobi's city center. They also blocked most pedestrians from entering the capital, only allowing those deemed to have essential duties. Roads leading to parliament stormed in a protest last year and the president's office were barricaded using razor wire.

"There is no reversing the Gen Z Saba Saba-like spirit," said Macharia Munene, professor of history and international relations at United States International University Africa in Nairobi. "Attempt to criminalize protests is reactive and will not work. It instead makes the government appear retrogressive and desperate enough to subvert the constitution."

Interior Minister Kipchumba Murkomen said on Sunday that the government would not tolerate violent protests and police would be deployed to ensure public safety. Last month, Murkomen told police to "shoot on sight" anyone who approaches police stations during protests after several had been burned.

Public Service Minister Geoffrey Ruku had urged all government employees to report to work on Monday, insisting that the demonstrations would not disrupt public services.❑

Trump accuses Brazilian authorities of 'witch hunt' against ex-President Jair Bolsonaro

Former President Jair Bolsonaro speaks during a protest against his Supreme Court trial, in which he is accused of involvement in a 2022 coup attempt, in Sao Paulo, Sunday, June, 29, 2025.
Associated Press

By MAURICIO SAVARESE
Associated Press

SAO PAULO (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday criticized Brazilian authorities over what he called "a witch hunt" against former President Jair Bolsonaro and said he will be "closely monitoring" his trial.

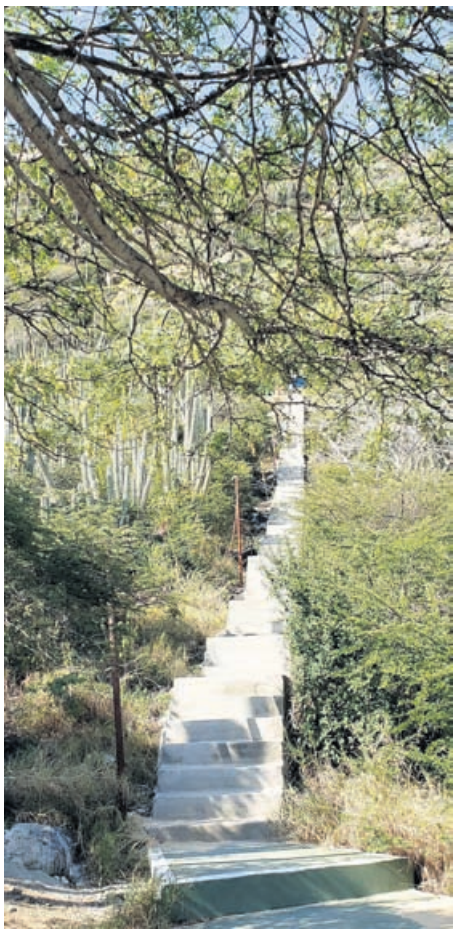
The South American far-right leader, who governed between 2019 and 2022, is standing trial before the country's Supreme Court for his role in an alleged coup attempt in January 2023. He is already ineligible for next year's vote. The former president has repeatedly denied the allegations and said he is the target of political persecution.

In his first such comment since Bolsonaro's trial began, Trump said in a social media post that Brazil "is doing a terrible thing in their treatment" of his ally. He added that Bolsonaro "is not guilty of anything, except for having fought for the people," and compared the Brazilian's situation to his own.

"This happened to me, times 10," the U.S. president said. "I will be closely monitoring the witch hunt of Jair Bolsonaro, his family, and thousands of his supporters. Leave Bolsonaro alone!"

Bolsonaro responded by saying on social media that Trump's "fight for peace, justice and liberty echoes worldwide," and he thanked the U.S. leader for "giving us a role model for faith and resilience."❑

Enjoy one of the best views on Aruba at the top of the Hooiberg Hill



(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session, then you might enjoy one of the most popular climbing sites on the island: The Hooiberg Hill. Accompanied with a 600-step staircase, this hill overlooks a great part of the island, the Caribbean sea, and sometimes even the Santa Anna mountain located in the coastal state of Falcon in Venezuela, providing one of the best views you can get on Aruba.

located at the center district of the island, Santa Cruz, the Hooiberg Hill is the second highest point on the island at 165 meters above sea level (or about 540 feet above sea level). The highest point is Jamanota Hill at 189 meters (620 feet), located in the Arikok National Park.

The staircase that run on the side of the hill was first built in 1951, when Mr. Eduardo Tromp constructed it. At that time, the staircase consisted of 900 steps. Over time, as the steps faced erosion, the government decided to renovate these stairs in 1991. This new project delivered the newer staircase with only 587 steps. However, don't be fooled—it may still be a work out to get on top. In addition, there is now a gazebo placed halfway up the stair for a little rest. The view at this resting stop is also a sight to see.

The best time to climb the hill would be early in the morning or right before sunset, as it may not be as hot. However, the hill is of course open all day, every day.❑

A quick snack for the road: Learn how to make the Aruban Pastechi!

(Oranjestad)—If you ever been to Aruba before, you probably heard of (and even tried) the Aruban Pastechi. Beloved by young and old, this tasty treat is a staple for party snacks, a quick lunch or even breakfast!

Here's how to make the Pastechi dough.

Ingredients:
4 cups of wheat flour
1 tbsp baking powder (if using self-rising flour, omit baking powder)
1 tsp salt
1 tbsp sugar
0.5 cup of melted butter
1 cup water
1 egg

Directions:
Sift your flour into a bowl and add all the dry ingredients before giving it a quick mix. Next add the butter, water and egg and mix until thoroughly combined. At this point, your dough will start to get sticky; time for an arm workout. Knead your dough into the bowl you are using or on a clean surface with some flour lightly dusted until its surface is smooth. You'll know your dough is ready when it doesn't stick to your hands or the surface on which you're kneading it. Let your dough rest covered for 15-20 minutes.

After resting, divide your dough into approximately 100 gram balls and roll it flat with a rolling pin. The thickness of the pastechi depends on your taste, but the average thinness would be around ¼ inch or so.

Filling for the pastechis varies according to your taste. The easiest and most common filling you'll find in Aruba is a simple cheese filling. For this, we usually use shredded Gouda, but feel free to use any cheese that melts well when frying the pastry.

Place the filling on your rolled out piece of dough, fold it in half and pinch the sides shut with a fork. If you have a folding tool, feel free to use it for this process. Your pastechi is ready for the fryer!

If you want to store some pastechis for later use, you can freeze them. A good tip is to place a piece of wax paper in between each pastechi if you are to store them on top of one another. This way the pastechis don't stick to each other when defrosting.

Here in Aruba we enjoy pastechi at any time of the day, but it has become almost tradition to eat pastechis for breakfast on the way to work. Many roadside snack trucks sell pastechi from early morning to noon, and offer a variety of fillings like cheese; ham and cheese; ground beef and pulled chicken to name a few. ❑

Po-Ké Ono Brings Bold Asian Fusion to Aruba's Dining Scene

Innovative eatery blends island culture with modern Asian cuisine

In a culinary landscape known for its diversity and creativity, Po-Ké Ono stands out as a vibrant and contemporary addition to Aruba's restaurant scene. With locations at Azure in Palm Beach and the Renaissance Marketplace in Oranjestad, the concept introduces a refreshing take on Asian fusion dining—casual in style, yet refined in execution.

Established in 2020, Po-Ké Ono was envisioned as a space where flavor, culture, and creativity intersect. The menu features an array of signature dishes including poke bowls, steamed bao, and sushi, crafted with precision and a focus on freshness. Drawing on Asian influences, the restaurant delivers bold flavors in an approachable format, appealing to a broad audience of locals and visitors alike.

The ambiance is designed to be welcoming and relaxed, with a philosophy centered around accessibility and enjoyment. Whether dining indoors or grabbing a quick bowl on the go, guests can expect a consistently high standard in both service and cuisine. With extensive menu options, including selections for vegan diners, Po-Ké Ono caters to a wide range of tastes and dietary preferences.

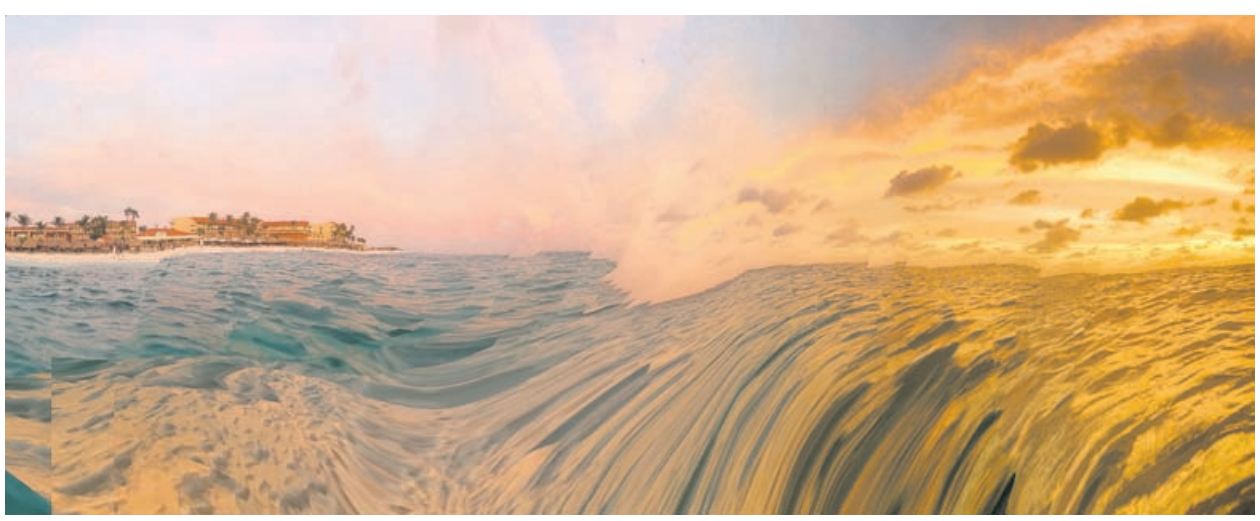
While the concept leans into fast-casual dining, the quality of ingredients and thoughtful preparation reflect fine-dining roots. Many of the restaurant's core ingredients are sourced locally, emphasizing sustainability and support for Aruba's agricultural community. The result is a dining experience that honors both the island's

spirit and the culinary traditions it draws inspiration from.

Open daily from 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM, Po-Ké Ono continues to gain recognition as one of the island's premier destinations for sushi, poke, and bao. Its growing popularity is a testament to Aruba's evolving food culture—one that embraces global influence while staying rooted in community and craft.

For those seeking a modern taste of Asia in the heart of the Caribbean, Po-Ké Ono offers a flavorful and memorable experience worth exploring.❑

Aruba to me



ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is ……. Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Uwe Neitzel from Portland, Oregon, USA.

He wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is sand like sugar, crystal clear waters and relaxation. And a wonderful home away from home."

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers!❑

Casago Aruba Promotes Hospitality Scholarship During Presentation at EPI

On July 3rd, representatives from Casago Aruba visited the EPI School of Hospitality and Tourism to host an informative presentation about their established hospitality scholarship program. The session aimed to raise awareness among students about opportunities for further education at the University of Aruba and to encourage them to pursue careers in the island's growing tourism industry.

Casago Aruba's four-year scholarship, which fully funds tuition at the Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management Studies at the University of Aruba, has already been supporting the development of local talent. The recent visit to EPI reflects the company's continued commitment to outreach and educational support within the community.
Although the presentation was held at EPI, the scholarship remains open to all eligible students in Aruba who are passionate about hospitality and meet the selection criteria.

Scholarship Application Details
Eligibility Requirements:

- Must be **accepted** into the **University of Aruba**
- Applications must be sent to **fleur.vanbohemen@ua.aw** by **July 15th, 2025**
- Must demonstrate a **genuine interest** in the hospitality industry
  - Applicants should outline their career goals, reasons for choosing hospitality, and long-term aspirations
- Must be between **17 and 25 years old**
- Must maintain **consistent attendance** in all enrolled courses
- Must be **committed to completing the degree program**, as the scholarship covers the full duration

Casago Aruba views education as a cornerstone of sustainable tourism and continues to invest in initiatives that uplift local youth. By reaching out directly to students, the company hopes to inspire the next generation of hospitality professionals and strengthen Aruba's position as a world-class destination led by homegrown talent.

Students interested in applying are encouraged to contact the **University of Aruba** for more information.❑

Aruba Tourism Authority honored a loyal visitor at Renaissance Wind Creek Aruba Resort!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Emerald Ambassador of Aruba. The honoree was respectively honored with a certificate for her years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The threelevels of honor are as follows:
Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honoree was:
Emerald Ambassador Ms. Margaret Lynch from Westwood Massachusetts, United States.

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Renaissance Wind Creek Aruba Resort bestowed the certificate upon the honoree, presented her with gifts, and thanked her for choosing Aruba as her favorite vacation destination, as her home away from home.

The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honoree were:

- Seeing my local friends of many years again.
- The magnificent daily sunsets.
- The beauty of Aruba, especially away from the resort areas, is truly remarkable.

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honoree for her continued visits to the "One Happy Island".❑

Aruba's Bocas: home to the rarest fossil reefs on the planet!

(Oranjestad) — If you've been to the northern coast of Aruba already, you've probably noticed how the ground differs entirely from the sandy beaches on the southern part of the island. These hard surfaces, with sharp bumps and holes are actually fossilized coral reefs, of which its growth and changes can be traced back to the last glacial period.

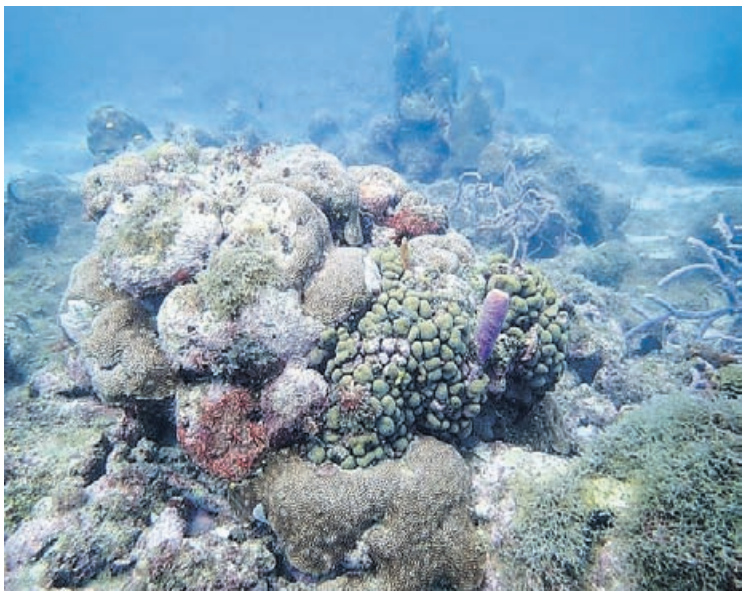
On May 30 2023, geoscientists, Dr. Patrick Boyden from the Marum research faculty at the University of Bremen, Prof. dr. Alessio Rovere from the Ca' Foscari University of Venice and Prof. dr. Gianfranco Scicchitano, from the University of Bari Aldo Moro, presented their research on these fossilized coral reefs at the University of Aruba. Their focus for their research included studying the health and formation patterns of these coral reefs, and to investigate how these reefs have responded and can respond to fluctuating sea levels or extreme weather, like hurricanes and tsunamis.

Through underwater and land surveillance, and 3D models of the reefs, they were able to narrow down when these formations started to take place. They were also able to track the fluctuation of sea levels during the past hundred or even thousands of years, and the effects that this fluctuation has had on the coral reefs of the windward side of Aruba.

These findings can certainly put things into perspective. The ground on which we have walked many times in the northern part of the island hold such rich history, history that dates back to a time that most of us cannot even imagine.

As the scientists themselves have pointed out, these fossilized reefs on the windward side are truly an incredible and rare remnant of geological history, as they provide a clear view of how these reefs have formed.

This research is also important for the future of coral reefs on the island. By studying rising sea levels and climate impact on these coral reefs, we are able to take concrete action in protecting and preserving our coral reefs. So, if you are ever visiting one of the bocas or driving along the northern part of the island, please be conscious to help protect our natural historical remnant. Oh, and wear (coral-friendly) sunscreen! ❑



A guide for the perfect picture

Where to find the most Instagrammable places in Oranjestad

(Oranjestad)—Imagine, you're taking a stroll in the city center, and you want to take the most picture-perfect photo to show your friends and family back home and online. It seems like the perfect spot can be hard to find, but Oranjestad is full of great spots for a quick snapshot! Here are the most Instagrammable places in Oranjestad.

"I LOVE ARUBA"

Right on Paardenbaai Plaza, near the harbor entrance, you will spot a giant sign that reads "I LOVE ARUBA". A great first stop for a quick shot with the family, this spot is among the few that has become a favorite among tourists, especially those that are visiting Aruba through a cruise vacation.

Speaking of giant signs that read "Aruba" (because there can never be too many), there is another sign you can find along the Linear Park, in front of Talk of the Town Hotel. It may be a long walk from the harbor to get there, but while you're at it, check out these other spots along the way!

The sitting bull

Yes, you read that right; right in the heart of the city center, in front of the Crystal Casino in the Renaissance Mall, there is a black bull sitting on a bench, waiting for you to take a picture with it. Ok, so it's not a real bull, but "I took a picture with a sitting bull" sounds like a great conversation opener.

See if you can also spot the cow on the roof!

Wooden Swing on Plaza Daniel Leo

While you're in front of the Renaissance Mall, check out the wooden swing on the other side of the mall on Plaza Daniel Leo. Another favorite among visitors wanting a cute snapshot for Instagram. Just pass through the Renaissance Mall and find this gem in front of the back entrance!

Since you've made it this far, one question: How many blue horses have you spotted already?

Renaissance Dock

Last but certainly not least, the Renaissance Dock is the perfect spot to take a beautiful picture, especially at sunset. The dock is located behind the Renaissance Market Place, and runs from the Renaissance Marina up to Renaissance Beach and Wilhelmina Park. This spot offers a gorgeous view of the ocean and sunset, accompanied by the soft waves crashing on the shoreline. You may even spot some iguanas!❑

Did you know about...?

The history and meaning of the Aruban florin

(Oranjestad)—Aruba Today is proud to officially introduce a new segment called Did you know about…?, where we dive into some (historical) facts of Aruba, its culture and way of living. In this first edition, we look back at the Aruban florin: its history, design and symbolism.

In Aruba, we know the 5, 10, 25 and 50 cent coins, along with the 1 and 5 Florin coin. Aruban Florin bills include the 10, 25, 50, 100, and rarely, the 200 bills. In Papiamento we call our currency Florin, but the umbrella term for money is placa. Cents are called cen (pronounced: seng), both in the singular and plural form. Most coins are circular and their size depend on their worth. However, the 50 cent coin is easily recognizable by their square shape, as is the 5 Florin coin by their golden color. Every coin has the Aruban emblem carved on it, with the other side displaying the worth of the coin. The bigger 1 and 5 florin coins, however, contain the carving of the emblem on one side, while displaying the side profile of the Dutch king, Willem-Alexander, on the other side. When his mother, Princess Beatrix, was reigning queen, it was her profile that was carved on the two coins.

Outdated Aruban coins and their names

In the past, Aruban coins had distinctive names and also varied in worth. For example, a 5-cent coin was once called Dos placa; 10-cent coins were called debchi; 25-cent coins were called diez placa and the 50-cent coin was once called Yotin (pronounced: jo-teen). We also used a distinctive coins worth 2 ½ cents, called placa too. However, this last coin is no longer in use and has become a relic of Aruban money. Back then, the 5-Florin coin used to also be square, but now it is circular.

Aruban bills: their design and symbolism

The Aruban Florin collection contains a variation of colorful bills, displaying incredibly detailed and beautiful designs that tell the story of Aruba on a single piece of paper.

Prior to 2019, the Aruban Florin bills were relatively simpler in design compared to now, but still included beautiful designs and colors, often depicting local animals. These past designs were made by the Aruban artist Everino Fingal in 1990 up to 2019. Between 1990 and 1993, the 5 Florin coin was a bill. The Fingal designs also included a 500-Florin bill, which has now been discontinued.

In 2019, the Central Bank of Aruba commissioned a new design of the Aruba Florin bills, this time selecting artist and former art teacher, Nigel Matthew, to present his new design. Matthew kept the tradition of including local animals and the familiar colors on the bills. However, he included additional designs that represent the Aruban culture and link to the Indigenous inhabitants that were the first to set foot on the island.

Current design and symbolism

10 florin

On the 10-florin bill, you can see a Turtuga blanco (white turtle). The blue color symbolizes the blue Caribbean Sea. You can also see the ruins of the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins, a coral motif, and the symbols of Cas Floria (traditional Aruban house design) with a piece of mosaic.

25 florin

On this orange bill, you can see an Aruban medicinal plant called Shoshoro. The birds Trupiaal, Shoco, rock drawings, and the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic are also depicted. There is also a Purun di ceramica (clay pot), in reference to the relics left behind by our indigenous ancestors.

50 florin

On this bill, we see the Cododo (blue lizard found on the ABC islands), Cangreu di tera (land crab), Willem III Tower, and again the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, as well as a beach plant called Banana di rif. The colors are pink/purple.

100 florin

This bill is green in color, representing nature. Here we see the Yuwana (Iguana), Aloe, Toteki (lizard), the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, and a dance group performing the Baile di cinta (forkloric dance with silk ribbons).

200 florin

There is another bill with a value of 200 dollars. The brown color symbolizes the earth of Aruba. Here we see the Dornasol and the Warawara—both local birds, along with the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, the Tuna cactus plant, and the Caha di orgel (folkloric instrument, used for many traditional songs).

Extra fact:

the word "florin" supposedly is named after the Italian city of Florence or it's a reference to the Italian word "florino", both explanations related to historical Italian currencies.❑

Source: Placa, placa, placa by the National Library of Aruba

CROSSWORD

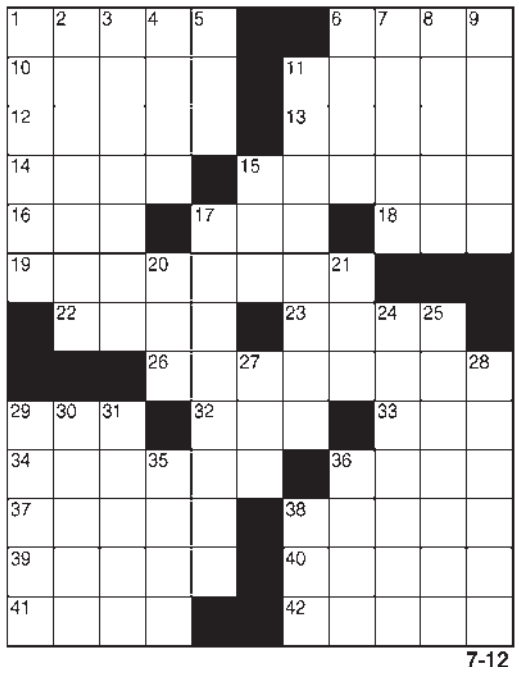
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Ice cream unit
6 Lasso
10 "Hush!"
11 Aspirations
12 Sports spot
13 Some signs
14 Pool tool
15 Posture
16 Star pitcher
17 Brit. fliers
18 Kinsey topic
19 More than dented
22 Antlered animal
23 Tuning knob
26 United to intimidate
29 Argon or xenon
32 Casual top
33 Genetic stuff
34 "Little Women" author
36 Violin quartet
37 Plant life
38 Academy student
39 Airline prices
40 Church feature
41 Looks over
42 Plunder

DOWN

1 Sacred beetle
2 Venezuela's capital
3 Penny words
4 Pig sound
5 School org.
6 Italia's capital
7 Some tourneys
8 Pound parts
9 Newark's county
11 Sundae topper
15 Blue
17 River contests
20 Joke
21 Bakery buy
24 Augmented
25 Attack suddenly
27 Tennis need
28 Bakery buy
29 Social blunder
30 Assuage
31 Point count
35 Metal sources
36 — Alto
38 Truck part



7-12

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

7-12 CRYPTOQUOTE

AZE GSAKTU SCOT XETCDTP LSCD N HNJT DA XCHH UCPP — UAXNCH CDDTKDNAK PTQNXND PNUAEPTE. — PCK HTOF

Cryptoquote: THERE ARE NO BEAUTIFUL SURFACES WITHOUT A TERRIBLE DEPTH. — NIETZSCHE

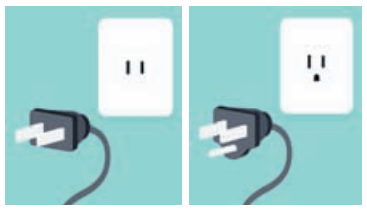
Cruise ship Schedule: July 02 - 16 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
WED	02	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
SUN	06	*FREEWINDS - Dept.*	****	22.30	E	-
TUE	08	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	C	1
WED	09	FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
SUN	13	*FREEWINDS - Dept.*	****	22.30	E	-
TUE	15	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS	07.00	16.00	C	1
WED	16	OASIS OF THE SEAS	11.00	23.00	I	1
		CARNIVAL VISTA	08.00	16.00	C	1
		RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	B	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

		2			3			
4	3						1	9
8		6	5		9		2	
7	6	3	2					4
	5	4	3	9	1	6		
1	8		4	7	6			
				3			8	5
		7	9					1
3			1	5		4		

Difficulty: ★★ 7/8

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Answer to previous puzzle

9	6	4	7	3	1	5	2	8
7	1	5	4	8	2	3	9	6
8	3	2	5	9	6	4	7	1
3	4	7	8	2	5	1	6	9
5	2	8	6	1	9	7	4	3
1	9	6	3	4	7	2	8	5
4	5	1	9	7	8	6	3	2
2	8	3	1	6	4	9	5	7
6	7	9	2	5	3	8	1	4

Difficulty: ★ 7/7

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How to prepare for a hurricane, as forecasters expect a busy 2025 storm season

Waves crash over a seawall at the mouth of the Miami River from Biscayne Bay, Fla., as storm surge from Hurricane Irma impacts Miami on Sept. 10, 2017.

Associated Press

By JUAN A. LOZANO
Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Hurricane season can be stressful for millions of Americans living in coastal areas, as powerful winds and heavy rain can cause widespread damage, cut power for days or weeks and otherwise upend people's lives.

Forecasters are expecting another unusually busy season for the Atlantic, with predictions calling for six to 10 hurricanes, with up to half reaching major status. But the stress of hurricane season can be reduced if people have a plan for preparing their homes and for whether to stay and ride out a storm or evacuate, according to emergency management officials. That preparation, which includes putting together a kit of essential supplies, should begin long before a storm is approaching. "Don't be complacent, take preparedness seriously, spend the time now to do the little things that will make a big difference for you and your loved ones when something does happen," said Brian Mason, director of Houston's Office of Emergency Management.

How to prepare a home for a storm

Anything in the backyard that isn't tied down, such as furniture and barbecue grills, should be secured or brought inside so it doesn't become a flying projectile that can come through a window, said Shawn Schulze, regional CEO for the American Red Cross Texas Gulf Coast Region.

If possible, board up windows and place important documents such as passports and birth certificates in a waterproof case or even a Ziploc bag, Schulze said. That will prevent damage and make documents easier to locate in a quick evacuation.

Mason recommends that homeowners get their roofs inspected before each hurricane season and know how to turn off their utilities in case of damage.❑

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Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas
Imsan 24 hours
Tel.524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:
Eagle: Tel.587 9011
San Nicolas:
Centro Medico: Tel.584 5794

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	**100**
Oranjestad	**527 3140**
Noord	**527 3200**
Sta. Cruz	**527 2900**
San Nicolas	**584 5000**
Police Tipline	**11141**
Ambulancia	**911**
Fire Dept.	**115**
Red Cross	**582 2219**

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	**587 5900**
Prof. Taxi	**588 0035**
Taxi D.T.S.	**587 2300**
Taxi Serv. Aruba	**583 3232**
A1 Taxi Serv.	**280 2828**

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	**524 2424**
American Airlines	**582 2700**
Avianca	**588 0059**
Jet Blue	**588 2244**
Surinam	**582 7896**

AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank
Tel. 588 0002

FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

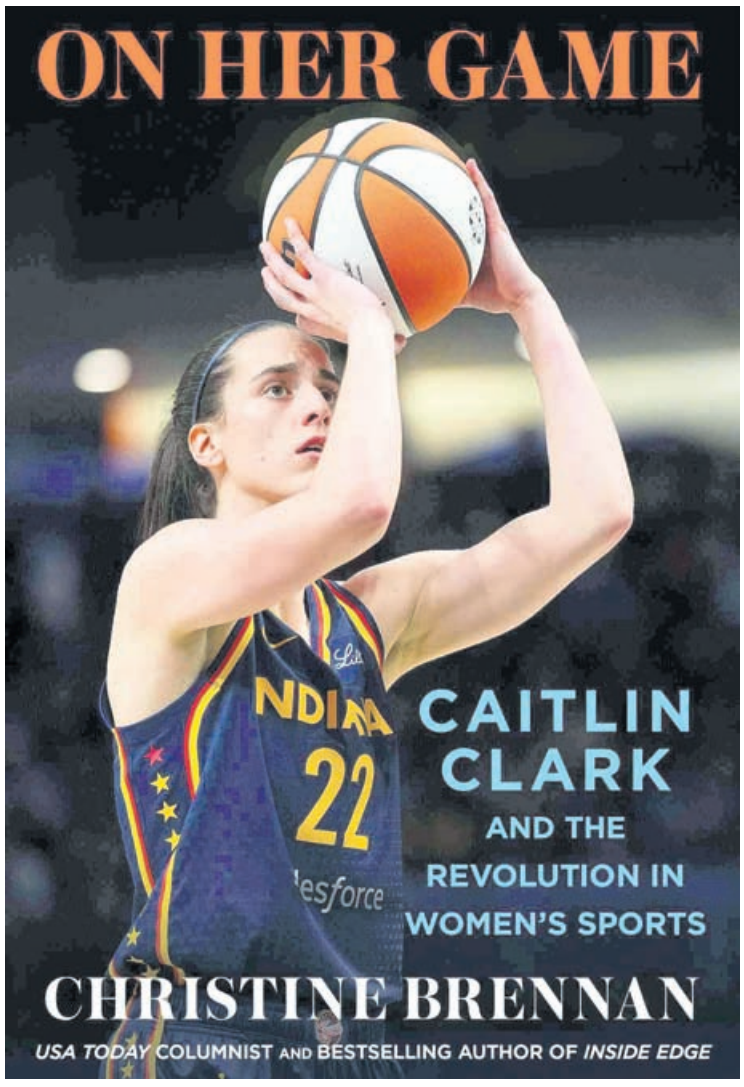
Book Review: Christine Brennan's 'On Her Game' explores the Caitlin Clark Effect on the WNBA

By ROB MERRILL
Associated Press

"On Her Game: Caitlin Clark and the Revolution in Women's Sports," the title of USA Today columnist Christine Brennan's new book about the WNBA star, is doing a lot of work.

On one hand, it's about the game, right? Nobody can deny Caitlin Clark's talent on a basketball court, where her rookie season stats with the Indiana Fever were eye-popping: 19.2 points, 8.4 assists and 5.7 rebounds per game while leading the WNBA in assists and 3-pointers made. On the other hand, why is Caitlin Clark the poster child for a "Revolution in Women's Sports?" The WNBA's been around since 1997 and plenty of female athletes are or were the very best at what they do, inspiring millions of young women to play all sorts of sports from Serena Williams to Simone Biles to Lindsey Vonn.

But there's something more to the Caitlin Clark phenomenon, and it's that something that Brennan's reporter instincts sensed early, when Clark was filling the Carver-Hawkeye Arena in Iowa City for every home game, well before her remarkable first year in the WNBA.



This cover image released by Scribner shows "On Her Game: Caitlin Clark and the Revolution in Women's Sports" by Christine Brennan.
(Scribner via Associated Press)

"What was going on?" writes Brennan in her introduction. "Was this because Clark is white and straight in a league that is 74% Black or mixed-race, with a sizable gay population?… Was it because of her eight-year $28 million Nike shoe deal?… Was it jealousy? Was it all of the above?"

Hoping to find answers or at least insights into those questions, Brennan convinced her editor to let her cover six straight weeks of Clark's first WNBA season, giving "On Her Game" a comprehensive feel, except for one thing: Clark never sat down for a one-on-one interview with Brennan. She did, however, answer every question Brennan posed at press conferences, and they are widely quoted throughout the book, along with all sorts of other Clark content like TV appearances and social media posts as well as interviews Brennan conducted with other WNBA players, coaches and various experts.

Brennan's presence at Fever games, home and away, and her intense focus on Clark as a singular story became a story of its own in September 2024, when Brennan asked follow-up questions of DiJonai Carrington, a Phoenix Sun player whose fingers made contact with Clark's eye during a playoff game. Brennan asked Carrington if there was anything intentional about it, she said no, and days later the WNBA Players Association called for Brennan's media credential to be revoked for "unprofessionalism." Ten months later, it's a good bet only the most diehard sports journalism fans will care about that controversy. Brennan makes it very clear how she feels about it. "I was doing my job," she writes. Clark's race and the frosty reception she got from some in the league is returned to again and again, with Brennan and the people she talked to asserting with incredulity that the WNBA wasn't ready for all the attention.

"The league needed to do a better job in preparing… to take advantage of the tsunami of popularity that is raising all of the boats," legendary civil rights activist Dr. Harry Edwards told Brennan. Instead, Brennan cites example after example from WNBA legends like Diana Taurasi and Sheryl Swoopes, to fellow female athletes like the WNBA's Breanna Stewart who made statements minimizing Clark's impact.❑

Pearl Jam drummer Matt Cameron says he's leaving the band after nearly 30 years

ANDREW DALTON
AP Entertainment Writer

(AP) — Pearl Jam drummer Matt Cameron said Monday that he's leaving the band after nearly 30 years.

The 62-year-old Cameron announced his departure in a social media post.

Matt Cameron of Pearl Jam performs during BottleRock Napa Valley on Saturday, May 25, 2024, in Napa, Calif.
Associated Press

"After 27 fantastic years, I have taken my final steps down the drum riser for the mighty Pearl Jam," Cameron said. "Much love and respect to Jeff, Ed, Mike and Stone for inviting me into the band in 1998 and for giving me the opportunity of a lifetime, filled with friendships, artistry, challenges and laughter."

Cameron didn't give a reason for his departure.

"Matt Cameron has been a singular and true powerhouse of a musician and drummer. He has propelled the last 27 years of Pearl Jam live shows and studio recordings. It was a deeply important chapter for our group and we wish him well always," Pearl Jam members said in a statement posted to the band's social media accounts.

They made no mention of a replacement.

Cameron, who played drums for Soundgarden for more than a decade before joining Pearl Jam, was not a founding member of the band and didn't play drums for the early albums that made them rock superstars.

But he provided some much-needed stability at the drum kit after the band had gone through four others since its inception. He first joined in 1998 as a temporary replacement for Jack Irons, playing on a long tour before making his studio debut with the group on 2000's "Binaural."

He just finished a yearlong tour with the band in support of its 12th studio album, "Dark Matter."

Cameron was born and raised in San Diego before moving to Seattle shortly before its music scene became a global phenomenon. He played in proto-grunge band Skin Yard before joining Soundgarden. He did double duty with Pearl Jam and a reunited Soundgarden from 2010 to 2017.❑

Manager Dave Martinez and GM Mike Rizzo get fired by the last-place Washington Nationals

WASHINGTON (AP) — Manager Dave Martinez and general manager Mike Rizzo were fired by the Washington Nationals in moves that were surprising for their timing, even if the club is more than halfway through its sixth consecutive losing season since winning the 2019 World Series.

The team announced the changes Sunday just hours after Washington's 6-4 loss at home completed a sweep by the Boston Red Sox. The Nationals are 37-53 and last in the NL East; the only National League club with a worse record is the Colorado Rockies.

But the amateur draft is just a week away, and Washington has the No. 1 overall pick.

Senior VP and assistant GM Mike DeBartolo is taking over for Rizzo on an interim basis. Bench coach Miguel Cairo was named interim manager Monday.

"Miguel is well-respected in our organization and around baseball," DeBartolo said. "A diligent worker and student of the game, he has a proven track record of showing strong leadership in a variety of situations, and I believe that his voice and energy will serve as a catalyst to our team and our fan base in the second half of the season."

Washington Nationals manager Dave Martinez, left, watches with general manager Mike Rizzo during spring training baseball practice Saturday, Feb. 18, 2023, in West Palm Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

Washington could have exercised options to extend the contracts of both Martinez and Rizzo beyond this season.

"While we are appreciative of their past successes," Nationals owner Mark Lerner said in a statement issued by the team, "the on-field performance has not been where we or our fans expect it to be. This is a pivotal time for our club, and we believe a fresh approach and new energy is the best course of action for our team moving forward."

Rizzo's time running the Nationals is over after more than a decade and a half. One of the Lerner family's first hires when it assumed control of the organization, Rizzo had been GM since 2009 and added the title of president of baseball operations in 2013.

"He played an instrumental role in leading the transformation of our farm system and building a roster that reached an unprecedented level of organizational success," Lerner said. "Mike helped make us who we are as an organization, and we're so thankful to him for his hard work and dedication."

Martinez is the fourth manager fired since the start of this season after Pittsburgh's Derek Shelton, Colorado's Bud Black and Baltimore's Brandon Hyde.

Martinez's full record with the Nationals was 500-622. Last month, he bristled at a reporter's question about how to split the blame for poor performance among players and his staff.

"It's never on coaching," Martinez said then. "Never on coaching. Coaches work their (butts) off every single day. We're not going to finger point here and say it's coaches. It's never on the coaches. They work hard. The message is clear. All the work is done prior. So, sometimes, they have to go out there and play the game. It's always been about the players. Always."

Martinez had never been a manager at any level when Rizzo hired him to replace Dusty Baker before the 2018 season. The Nationals went 82-80 in Martinez's first season and got off to a 19-31 start the following year, leading to some calls for him to be replaced.

But Rizzo stuck with Martinez, and that decision paid off in a big way: Led by starting pitchers Stephen Strasburg, who earned World Series MVP honors, and Max Scherzer, rookie outfielder Juan Soto, young shortstop Trea Turner and a string of veterans including Howie Kendrick, Ryan Zimmerman and Anthony Rendon the Nationals won the franchise's first title.❑

Tour de France: Belgian rider Merlier wins third stage, Pogačar finishes safely

DUNKERQUE, France (AP) — Belgian rider Tim Merlier won the third stage of the Tour de France in a photo finish and Mathieu Van der Poel kept the yellow jersey on Monday.

Defending champion Tadej Pogačar and two-time winner Jonas Vingegaard the main contenders finished safely as they rolled in together with the main pack.

When the sprinters turned for home into a strong headwind, several crashed near the line at top speeds of 65 kph (40 mph). Merlier just got the front of his wheel in front of Italian Jonathan Milan as they lunged to the line. German rider Phil Bauhaus was third.

It was Merlier's second career stage win on the Tour, four years after his first, which also came on Stage 3.

"It was a big battle and it was difficult to maintain my position, I came from very far back in the last two kilometers," he said. "When I found myself next to Milan, I knew it would be complicated to beat him."

Van der Poel, who rides for the Alpecin-Deceuninck team, did not contest the sprint the day after narrowly beating Pogacar to win Sunday's rainy and hilly second stage.

Riders set off on Monday in wet conditions and wore light rain jackets on a 178-kilometer (110-mile) flat route from Valenciennes to the coastal city of Dunkerque.

The pace was slower than the two first days but the conditions were treacherous and, about 50 kilometers from the end, Stage 1 winner Jasper Philipsen abandoned.

The Alpecin-Deceuninck rider was knocked over by Frenchman Bryan Coquard and landed heavily on his side. Coquard was not to blame, however, as he lost balance only after being clipped by a rider overtaking him on the right.❑

Belgium's Tim Merlier celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the third stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 178.3 kilometers (110.8 miles) with start in Valenciennes and finish in Dunkerque, France, Monday, July 7, 2025.

Associated Press

Wimbledon: Novak Djokovic, Ben Shelton and 18-year-old Mirra Andreeva reach the quarterfinals

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer

LONDON (AP) — Right before Wimbledon began, Novak Djokovic declared it was the tournament that gave him the best chance to claim an unprecedented 25th Grand Slam singles trophy.

Made sense, really, given that he's won seven titles there already and reached the past six finals.

For one uncharacteristically unsteady set in the fourth round Monday, it sure didn't look as if that would happen this year. Djokovic, though, turned things around and avoided what would have been his earliest exit at the All England Club since 2016, coming through for a 1-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 victory over 11th-seeded Alex de Minaur at Centre Court.

With eight-time Wimbledon winner Roger Federer sitting in the front row of the Royal Box, very little went right at the outset for the 38-year-old Djokovic on the grass below during a breezy afternoon with the temperature in the 60s Fahrenheit (teens Celsius), a week after matches were contested in record-breaking heat.

"A lot of challenging moments for me," Djokovic said right after the win, then later called it a "big, big relief" not to get pushed to a fifth set.

Serbia's Novak Djokovic gestures during a change of ends break against Australia's Alex de Minaur during a fourth round men's singles match at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London, Monday, July 7, 2025.

Associated Press

He trailed 4-1 in the fourth before taking the last five games and 14 of the final 15 points.

"Lifted his level," de Minaur said, "big-time."

Djokovic's bid for an eighth Wimbledon title and 25th Grand Slam singles trophy overall will continue against No. 22 Flavio Cobolli of Italy.

Cobolli reached his first major quarterfinal with a 6-4, 6-4, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (3) victory over 2014 U.S. Open champion and two-time major runner-up Marin Cilic.

No. 10 Ben Shelton improved to 3-0 against Lorenzo Sonego at majors this year by beating him 3-6, 6-1, 7-6 (1), 7-5. Shelton's first Wimbledon quarterfinal will come against either No. 1 Jannik Sinner or No. 19 Grigor Dimitrov.

Against de Minaur, Djokovic made mistake after mistake, double-faulting four times in the first set alone. Djokovic lost five of his first seven service games against de Minaur, a 26-year-old Australian who accumulated 19 break points in all.

Djokovic made 16 unforced errors in the first set alone.

All in all, Djokovic was discombobulated, chalking it up afterward to nerves and a swirling wind. He rushed between points. He reacted to flubbed shots by rolling his eyes or shouting and glaring in the direction of his guest box or putting his arms wide as if seeking explanations from someone, anyone.

At changeovers, he placed an ice-filled towel usually wrapped around necks by players in steamy conditions on his stomach, which he complained about during his first-round victory last week. But afterward, Djokovic dismissed the significance of that.

A loss would have been Djokovic's soonest at Wimbledon since he was eliminated in the third round by Sam Querrey nine years ago.

Since winning his men's-record 24th major title at the 2023 U.S. Open, Djokovic has come close to raising his total. He was the runner-up to Carlos Alcaraz at Wimbledon last year the second consecutive time they met in the final, with the results the same and departed each of the first two Slams of 2025 in the semifinals.

No man as old as Djokovic is now has won a major championship. He keeps showing why it's not preposterous to think he could.

"I didn't have many solutions, to be honest," Djokovic said, "but I just reset myself in the second."

By the very end, it's almost as though de Minaur was resigned to defeat, knowing he's only the latest and perhaps not the last opponent to succumb to a surging Djokovic.❑

Boxing great Julio César Chávez defends son arrested by U.S. immigration agents

Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. arrives for his cruiserweight boxing match against Jake Paul, in Anaheim, Calif., June 28, 2025.

Associated Press

By CARLOS RODRIGUEZ
Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — As a professional, Julio César Chávez fought 115 times in the ring. Now, the former world champion said he was ready to fight outside of it to defend his same-name son, who was arrested by U.S. immigration agents at his Los Angeles home for overstaying his visa and lying on a green card application.

The 39-year-old Chávez Junior also has an active warrant for his arrest in Mexico for alleged arms and drug trafficking and suggested ties to the Sinaloa Cartel.

"It's complicated, there's a lot of talk, but we're calm because we know my son's innocence," the elder Chavez told El Heraldo newspaper.

"My son will be anything you want, anything, but he is not a criminal and less everything he's being accused of."

Alejandro Gertz Manero, Mexico's Attorney General, said on Sunday that the investigation against Chávez Junior started in 2019 after a complaint filed by U.S. authorities against the Sinaloa Cartel for organized crime, human trafficking, arms trafficking, and drug trafficking.

"He knows a lot of people, we live in Culiacan, it would be impossible not to know all of the people that are doing illicit stuff, but that does not mean nothing," Chavez said.

"In my time I met everybody, and they did not come after me."❑